

## King's Children.

M. R. O. NOTES.—NO. 9.

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THE WALLED KINGDOM.

This is the name by which China has been known for centuries. It is so called because of the "Great Wall" on the north, which is twelve hundred and forty miles long, twenty feet high, with towers every few hundred yards, carried over highest mountains and deepest valleys, crossed over rivers upon arches and was doubled in important passes.

It was built during the reign of Ching-wang (246-210 B. C.) completed 215 B. C. To keep back the fierce tribes from the north, who after many ineffectual attempts to over-run China, turned to the west and five-hundred years afterward made their appearance on the continent of Europe, and as *Huns* assisted in the downfall of Rome.

The Chinese Empire contains more than five-million square miles, twice the area of the U. S.; a population of five hundred million, one third of the population of the globe.

The Chinese Empire is divided into the following political divisions: China proper, Manchuria, Mongolia, Soongaria, Little Bucharra, Tibet, Corea and the islands of Hainan, Formosa and the Loo Choo group.

China Proper is divided into: Pechlee-Changtung, Kiang-su, Agan-hoei, Honan, Hoope, Chekiang, Kiangsi, etc., eighteen in all.

Of its natural advantages our author speaks thus, "No other country can claim artificial water communication of such extent; the Grand Canal 650 miles long is but the largest of 400 which form the highway of the empire for transit and travel and at the same time supply a system of irrigation. Within a country having a coast line of 3,350 miles, a frontier of 12,550, reaching thro 38 degrees of latitude and nearly twice as many in longitude, we may well expect to find every variety of animal, mineral and vegetable.

The Chinese Empire is the oldest now existing, and has, until this century, been a world within itself, having a history distinctly its own and not connected with the history of other nations.

It is the only ancient empire which has continued until the present time. It, and its institutions have outlasted every thing. "The ancient Bactrian and Assyrian kingdoms, the Persian monarchy, Greece and Rome have all risen, flourished and fallen,—and China continues still the same."

They have a very extravagant chronol-

ogy, making their country many thousand years old; and their early history not unlike that of all ancient nations, is lost in the dimness of a very remote antiquity.

From *Tan-kon* whom Confucious names as the first man, Chinese writers compute their history to cover ninety-six million years. This computation is now looked upon with contempt.

Its authentic history dates back about 5000 years, but the early portion is mythical. According to Chinese writers, the founder of this old monarchy was *Fo hi* who became Empire B. C. 2852.

It was during the reign of Li-Wang (571-544 B. C.) that *Confucious*, the great Chinese moral philosopher and teacher was born.

China is the type of permanence. Tho their dynasties have been changed time and again, their laws, customs and institutions, all that go to make up national life, have continued as begun; and even the repeated conquests of the country by foreign invaders have produced no changes,—the conquerors adopting the manners, customs and language of the conquered Chinese.

To the Chinese what has once been established must forever remain unaltered, and "all education consists in a mere mechanical training to move within certain fixed forms; and to do nothing but what some body has done before is considered as a sign of the most consummate wisdom."

It is to be specially noted, that the inventions of the Chinese, at an early date, such as the Mariner's Compass—gunpowder—and even printing, whilst being the means of gigantic progress and reform in European civilization, have never been employed by Chinese to any practical purpose.

The Chinese belong to the Mongolian race which comprises the nations of all Eastern and a great part of central Asia, the race to which belongs the Japanese, Thibetans, Burmese, Siamese, Anamese, etc.

The Chinese language is as peculiar as the people. Their vocabulary consists of about 450 monosyllabic words, which by the use of accents and intonations, produce about 1200 different words. Their language is marked by extreme poverty; and in consequence many different meanings must be expressed by the same word, which in some instances is no fewer than thirty or forty.

The Chinese have no grammar. Declensions, congregations, etc., are unknown to them; and the relation of words to each other is indicated by their position alone.

Their writing is not alphabetic, as is

ours, but consists of compound characteristics, each representing some word or words, and the number of these characteristics form a singular contrast with the poverty of the language; for the Chinese dictionaries contain about four thousand of these characteristics. (Do they not seem to be the connecting link between the Alphabetic and Hieroglyphic systems of writing?)

In their customs, they are as opposite to us as is their geographical position. "We stand feet to feet in every thing." The following will illustrate:

With them the family name always precedes the personal; as Scott Walter instead of Walter Scott; Confucious or *Kung-fu tsee*, Kung is the family name.

They say East-north for North-east.

They prefer to have their fire-works in day time.

Visiting cards are red and four feet long.

The stomach is the seat of understanding.

Their mourning color is white.

A Chinaman mounts his horse from the right side.

We can only say of their government, that it is a system based on education. All the civil offices are given as rewards of literary merit. Their government is an Aristocracy; not an aristocracy of birth, of wealth, but it is a *literary* aristocracy.

All candidates for civil offices are examined by an officer appointed for that purpose. Of these examinations I quote thus, "Three sets of themes are given, each occupying two days and a night, and until that time is expired no one is allowed to leave his department. The essays must not contain more than seven-hundred characters and no *erasures* or corrections are allowed."

Three different religious systems are to be found in the Chinese Empire; Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism.

The first of these (Confucianism) can be best made known by a study of the life and teachings of Confucius. He has been the great teacher of the Chinese for more than twenty centuries.

His age is cotemporaneous with the Tarquins of Rome, the palmiest days of Greece and the return of the Jews from their seventy years bondage.

His is the oldest family, the Jews excepted. "His influence thro his writings on the minds of so many millions of human beings is greater than that of any man who ever lived, excepting the writers of the Bible"—Freeman Clark.

The first part of his life was spent in attempting to reform the abuses of society: the second as a minister in Loo where he made a practical application of his governmental theories. He resigned this of-